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DISCUSSION WITH AGENCIES/ENTITIES

COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
<p>Ways and Means (Technical Working Group)</p>	<p>Status of the automation system of the Bureau of Customs (BOC) in relation to the following bills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HB 6508 - Amending Sections 129, 164 & 225 of RA 8424, as amended, otherwise known as the National Internal Revenue Code of 1997 (by imposing stricter regulations of excisable products and increasing penalties for violation thereof), authored by Deputy Speaker Deogracias Victor "DV" Savellano; and • HB 7272 - Strengthening laws against the illicit trade of tobacco products and related raw materials by amending Sections 3 & 4 of RA 10845, otherwise known as the Anti-Agricultural Smuggling Act of 2016, amending Section 1141 and creating a new section 1700-A of RA 10863, otherwise known as the Customs Modernization and Tariff Act, amending Sections 129, 131, 156, 159, 225, 275 & 288 of RA 8424, as amended, authored by Deputy Speaker Savellano 	<p>The technical working group (TWG), chaired by Committee Vice Chair Rep. Sharon Garin (Party-List, AAMBIS-OWA), will continue its discussion on the status of implementation of BOC's automation system in its next meeting.</p> <p>Rep. Garin underscored the need for a thorough review of the automation system of the BOC in order to address its gaps and weaknesses and improve its implementation, thereby curtailing smuggling in the country and illegal transactions at the BOC.</p> <p>BOC Commissioner Rey Leonardo Guerrero presented the status of the automation of BOC's frontline transactions and the modernization of its risk management processes. He mentioned the following information technology systems that were already installed and are currently being implemented by the BOC: customs care portal system; document tracking system; goods declaration verification system; balikbayan box and parcel tracking system; alert order monitoring system; and enhanced value reference information system (e-VRIS).</p> <p>The e-VRIS aims to set up a reliable and comprehensive database of information on the value and classification of imports for reference in support of the implementation of the World Trade Organization's Valuation System. (<i>Source: BOC website</i>)</p> <p>According to Guerrero, the BOC also upgraded its electronic-to-mobile (E2M) system, which allowed the Bureau to computerize certain manual processes and accept online payments. He also said that major strides were undertaken last year in relation to the Customs Modernization Program (CMP), which is part of the BOC 2020 10-Point Priority Program. He said this year's implementation of the CMP will involve process reengineering and the installation of new customs systems in various BOC offices. A Customs Training Institute will also be established for the purpose of improving organizational efficiency, upgrading individual proficiencies, and strengthening institutional capabilities.</p> <p>The Customs Commissioner emphasized that the shift to full automation of BOC transactions and services will further improve the delivery of services to the public, minimize delays, and reduce face-to-face transactions with BOC personnel, thus curbing corruption and other inappropriate transactions in the Bureau.</p> <p>Rep. Sergio Dagooc (Party-List, APEC) asked about the key programs of the BOC for this year.</p> <p>Guerrero replied that one of the key programs of the BOC is the National Single Window (NSW) system that will serve as a reliable institutional platform for inter-agency collaboration and allow the exchange of trade data amongst the participating trade regulatory government agencies (TRGAs) at the national and regional levels. The NSW-TWG is headed by the Customs</p>

<p>Continuation... Ways and Means (Technical Working Group)</p>		<p>Commissioner. Guerrero added that the BOC, together with the Anti-Red Tape Authority, is targeting 15 more TRGAs to be onboard the program this year.</p> <p>Senior Vice Chair Rep. Estrellita Suansing (1st District, Nueva Ecija) inquired on the platform being used by the BOC for its automated inventory management system (IMS) for use by off-dock and off-terminal customs facilities and warehouses (CFWs).</p> <p>Guerrero informed the body that the platform was actually developed by an external service provider (E-Science Corporation) because the BOC did not have the capability to develop such system at the time. The BOC issued Customs Memorandum Order (CMO) No. 21-2021 prescribing the guidelines on the mandatory use of the automated IMS by off-dock and off-terminal CFWs. The CMO will take effect on July 1 and will enable the BOC to strictly monitor and generate real time and accurate information on the status of goods received, stored, and withdrawn from off-dock and off-terminal accredited CFWs.</p> <p>Muntinlupa City Rep. Ruffy Biazon recommended that the BOC should come up with its own system instead of outsourcing it from an external service provider. He said the BOC will be able to effectively interoperate or interconnect its various information technology systems if these are not being controlled by a service provider.</p> <p>Rep. Garin thanked the BOC for its valuable inputs in today's TWG meeting. She said the goal of the TWG is to help BOC enhance its services as well as improve its image, which unfortunately is often associated with corruption and irregularities.</p> <p>The BOC's external service provider, E-Science Corporation, will be invited to attend the next TWG meeting to answer the queries of the Members with regard to the automated IMS that will be used by off-dock and off-terminal CFWs.</p>
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